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Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SOE-02 AID-05 CEA-01 CIAE-00
COME-00 DODE-00 EB-08 DOE-15 H-02 INR-10 INT-05
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 OMB-01 PM-05 ICA-20 OES-07
SP-02 SS-15 STR-07 TRSE-00 ACDA-12 PA-02 /140 W
----------006211 210546Z /13
R 201904Z JUN 78
FM AMCONSUL TORONTO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7385
INFO AMEMBASSY OTTAWA
AMCONSUL CALGARY
AMCONSUL WINNIPEG

UNCLAS TORONTO 1120

E.O. 11652 N/A
TAGS: ENRG, EINV, SOPN, CA
SUBJECT: TORONTO PRESS ATTACKS TRUDEAU GOVERNMENT ON HUSKY OIL DEAL FROM VARYING VIEWPOINTS

REF: TORONTO 1090

1. BOTH THE NATIONALIST TORONTO STAR AND THE CONSERVATIVE TABLOID THE TORONTO SUN HAVE ATTACKED THE TRUDEAU GOVERNMENT ON ITS APPROACH TO THE HUSKY OIL PURCHASE - BUT FROM VERY DIFFERENT VIEWPOINTS.

2. THE TORONTO STAR'S LEAD EDITORIAL JUNE 19 "DON'T SELL OUT OUR RESOURCES"" CONTINUED ON THE THRUST OF THE JUNE 15 EDITORIAL REPORTED IN REFTEL, URGING THE GOVERNMENT TO "THROW ITS FULL SUPPORT BEHIND PETRO-CANADA IN ITS BID TO ACCQUIRE CONTROL OF HUSKY OIL." THE STAR REFERRED TO TRUDEAU'S PROMISE IN THE 1974 ELECTION CAMPAIGN THAT "MAJOR NEW RESOURCE PROJECTS WOULD HAVE TO HAVE 50 PER CENT AND PREFERABLY 60 PER CENT CANADIAN EQUITY OWNERSHIP." THE PAPER REFERRED TO STATEMENTS BY TRADE MINISTER JACK HORNER AND ENERGY
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MINISTER ALASTAIR GILLESPIE ON THE HUSKY DEAL WHICH SUGGEST THAT "THE TRUDEAU GOVERNMENT INDEED IS BACKING AWAY FROM ITS 1974 PLEDGE." THE STAR WROTE"YET THE ONLY WAY TO REALLY MAKE SURE THAT THE HEAVY OIL LANDS CAN BE DEVELOPED QUICKLY TO ENSURE FUTURE OIL SUPPLIES TO CANADIANS IIS TO MAKE SURE THE LAND THEMSELVES ARE OWNED BY A COMPANY WHOSE MANDATE IT IS TO WORK IN

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CANADA'S BEST INTEREST BY DEVELOPING THEM. THAT
COMPANY IS PETRO-CANADA." THE EDITORIAL CALLED ON THE
GOVERNMENT TO "CONFIRM AND REITERATE" THE POLICY OBJECTIVES
STATED DURING THE 1974 CAMPAIGN AND HELD THAT
"IN THE ABSENCE OF SUCH A STATEMENT REAFFIRMING ITS
PLEDGE TO REQUIRE MAJORITY CANADIAN OWNERSHIP OF ALL
MAJOR NEW NATURAL RESOURCE PROJECTS, CANADIANS CAN ONLY
CONCLUDE THAT THE TRUDEAU GOVERNMENT IN FACT HAS
QUIETLY ABANDONED ITS 1974 PROMISE."

3. THE TABLOID TORONTO SUN'S EDITORIAL JUNE 20 "PETRO-
CAN'T" ATTACKED THE GOVERNMENT FOR ANOTHER EXAMPLE OF
INTRUSION INTO THE PRIVATE SECTOR. "WOTINELL IS THE
TRUDEAU GOVERNMENT UP TO IN THE PETRO-CAN FIASCO TO
BUY HUSKY OIL? BECAUSE THE GOVERNMENT-OWNED PETRO-CAN'S
BID WAS TOPPED BY OCCIDENTAL OIL OF CALIFORNIA, THE
TRUDEAU GANG IS UNLIASHING THE JUSTICE DEPARTMENT TO
INVESTIGATE POSSIBLE COLLUSION. THERE IS NO EVIDENCE
OF WRONGDOING OF COURSE, JUST SOUR GRAPES. AND
IT AMOUNTS TO INTIMIDATION AND REPREISALS. VANANA
REPUBLICANISM, THIS TERRIBLE GOVERNMENT-THE WORST
AND MOST MALIGNANT IN OUR HISTORY-HAS A SOCIALIST
BENT IT PRETENDS IS PATRIOTIC NATIONALISM. WHAT IS IT
DOING IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR ANYWAY, BIDDING AGAINST
OIL COMPANIES? AND WHEN IT LOSES A BID-IT THREATENS
A VENDETTA. JUST LIKE A PETTY SOCIALIST DICTATORSHIP.
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THE FOVERNMANT SHOULD GOVERN, AND STAY OUT OF THE PRIVATE
SECTOR. IT SHOULDN'T BE IN THE SOFT DRINK BUSINESS,AND
IT SHOULDN'T BE USING PUBLIC MONEY TO MUSCLE INTO THE
OIL RACKET." THE SUN CONCLUDED"FORGET HUSKY. PASS
LEGISLATION THAT FORCES ANY DEALS INVOLVING OUR RESOURCES
TO BENEFIT CANADA, BUT UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES GET THE
BOVERNMENT INVOLVED IN PRIVATE ENTERPRISE. IT IS SIMPLY
MORE EVIDENCE OF THIS DESPOTIC GOVERNMENT'S MISUSE OF POWER
AND ITS VINDICTIVE STREAK WHEN IT IS THWARTED."
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